

We also quoted last week, in a passing manner, the testimony of M. Gréard, vice-rector of the University of Paris, as given in his memorandum by Chief-Inspector Fitch. M. Gréard, we may explain, is the head of the administration of the secular system in France, his superior being the Minister of Public Instruction, whose term of office is variable. M. Gréard is the permanent official and therefore the higher authority. He is, in fact, the highest authority in a country where, now for many years, secularism has been established. We shall repeat M. Gréard's words, they cannot be too often insisted upon or too widely known. We translate them as follows:—"We should like to see free teaching take its place in the development of our scholastic institutions. If the duty of the State is to create establishments which represent the national spirit, of which it is itself the expression, free teaching is one of the most lofty manifestations of a people's energy. It is not enough, then, to respect its legitimate independence, its expansion must be facilitated."—The free teaching, *enseignement libre*—free instruction, free education—alluded to is, we may explain, not free education in our colonial sense, or education at the expense of the State. It is the education of the "*écoles libres*," the free schools; schools, as Mr Fitch expresses it, "free from the control of the State," and "established and sustained on religious grounds." It is of these denominational schools, chiefly Catholic, that the permanent head of the secular system in France declares himself in favour. M. Gréard is also quoted by Chief-Inspector Fitch as speaking in favour of the voluntary system as it exists in England, that is the system of religious schools aided by the State "on condition of their doing effectively the secular work in which the State as such is mainly interested, and submitting the work to the test of inspection and examination." M. Gréard approves of this system as supplying opportunities and safeguards of great value. He speaks as follows:—"It seems that such a system would offer advantages only. It would free the town from the obligation of indefinitely creating schools, and, at the same time, it would permit it to contribute, with a certain grandeur, towards laying the foundations of a powerful free instruction; it would furnish to the communal (or State) teaching the elements of an enlightened competition; it would moderate the movement for the administrative centralisation of public instruction, which in evil days may become a dangerous instrument of party passions; finally, it would place men concerned for the future of the country in a position to try, with effective aid, what the fruitfulness of association for a work of education can be in France." We have placed in italics a passage that seems to us particularly applicable to our position in New Zealand, where educational authorities, of a different calibre from that of M. Gréard, appear to lay such stress on the advantages of a dull uniformity. M. Gréard evidently prefers an enlightened competition. We have, then, on one side M. Gréard, vice-rector of the University of Paris, and head of the administration of the secular system in France—and with him Mr. J. G. Fitch, one of her Majesty's Chief Inspectors of Training Colleges. On the other side we have, for egregious examples, our contemporaries the *Otago Daily Times* and the *Evening Star*. Are we not justified in asking again, is it simple ignorance or compound ignorance by which our contemporaries are guided? If it be simple ignorance only—to doubt the possibility of their conversion would be to offer an insult to their intelligence. We fear, however, that a virulent bigotry conspires with a dense ignorance to render their case hopeless.

THE Zulus are a people who, it would seem, are extremely troublesome to their Protestant missionaries. Was it not they, or at least one of them, who, some thirty or thirty-five years ago, proposed to Bishop Colenso some questions that more than staggered him, and caused a sensation throughout the whole Protestant world. Some converts of the nation have now challenged their missionaries to prove to them, from the very words of the Bible, that it is unlawful for them, as these missionaries declare, to sell their daughters for cattle. The missionaries, of course, can prove that, as they, or anyone else, can prove any tenet that they or he may choose to adopt, if only it be permitted to them to interpret the words of Holy Writ according to their particular lights. The question is, however, why should not the Zulus have the same right? It seems to us that it should not be hard for the Zulus to argue in support of their position. Laban, for example, sold his daughters to Jacob for the service that the suitor performed for him. Would not Laban have been within his rights in receiving cattle if they were offered by Jacob as an equivalent for his services? Given the fact that the Bible is open to every man to find the truth for himself, and that he is bound to do so—and the doctrine of private interpretation implies all that, and the Zulus have as good grounds for their argument as the missionaries have for theirs. The case, meantime, brings a little more strikingly before us the proposal that is made among ourselves to remove from the public schools the reproach of godlessness by introducing the Bible to be read there without note or comment. The Zulus are evidently a sharp people,

and very logical where questions of theology are concerned. Why should our schoolchildren derive more orthodox views than these converts do, from similar privileges? They read the Bible and interpret it for themselves, setting their missionaries at defiance, and claiming to be good Christians, while they retain a barbarous, but profitable, heathen practice. Why should children instructed as the Bible-in-schools people propose, turn out to be more orthodox?

"We are beginning," says the Brooklyn *Catholic Review*, "to perceive with a vengeance the effects of 'godless' education." Our contemporary makes this remark in reference to the state of morals among the American people. Last week we quoted from the correspondence of the *Otago Daily Times* a passage that spoke of a very disgraceful state of affairs. The *Catholic Review* makes us acquainted with another phase or two of the matter. He says there were last year (1892), in the United States, about five thousand convictions for murder—the number of cases in which there was a failure to convict not being recorded. If, he says, there be taken into consideration besides, the deaths caused by criminal carelessness or indifference—as in factories, in mines, and on the railways—the loss of life during last year, or any recent year, equals that occurring in an ordinary war. Our contemporary illustrates the almost brutally selfish want of consideration for others that characterises the Americans of the period by the maimings and mutilations among railway employees—the number per annum being fifty thousand or more. The victims in question he compares to the wounded in war. "But violence and unchastity," he says, "are never far apart. Of this latter crime in its every form the daily press teems with daily exposures. And both violence and unchastity have increased from year to year vastly out of proportion to the increase in our population." To all this the *Review* adds commercial dishonesty—which, he says, is general and alarming. "The increase of crime of all sorts," he asserts, "is notorious, and it is also notorious that no appreciable proportion of this increase can be laid upon the shoulders of the immigrants of the last few years. The evil such as it is belongs to Americans of all the races, without any noticeable difference, that is to native-born Americans and to foreign-born Americans who have been brought up and educated in American conditions." Our contemporary attributes this miserable condition of things primarily to the decline of religious belief. "But religious belief," he concludes, "so far as it is an attitude of the reasoning mind is the result of religious education and surroundings, and it is this kind of education and surroundings that have during a whole generation or more been denied to a large proportion of American youth. We are beginning to perceive with a vengeance the effects of 'godless' education."

THE exploit performed the other day by anarchists STIRRING POSSIBILITIES. German Emperor and his Chancellor, bids fair to issue in some lively and possibly eventful proceedings. The Emperor, we are told, has, in consequence, resolved to adopt stringent measures towards the Socialists of the Empire. The Socialists, however, are no mere handful of inconsiderable men. They occupy an important position, and include a large proportion of the population. Their number, moreover, has been for years, and no doubt still is on the increase. All the Members of Parliament for Berlin, for example, are members of the sect, and some of them belong to its extreme party, the anarchists. It is no child's play, therefore, on which the Emperor is about to enter. What the results may be it is impossible to foresee; but the probabilities are that the power of the Government will be weakened rather than strengthened. An internal contest of the kind can hardly tend to improve the position of the empire towards other powers. The relation, meantime, towards one foreign power in particular must be an additional cause of weakness, The Triple Alliance is seriously affected by the financial position of Italy, which is something more than on the verge of bankruptcy. The country is to all intents and purposes bankrupt, and the expedients adopted to conceal her condition become daily feebler and more transparent, France besides, who had always been her reliance, and the principle source of her commercial prosperity, has been alienated, and is engaged in an alliance unfriendly to her. The Triple Alliance, therefore, is impeded by the part taken in it by Italy. With a bankrupt ally abroad and a strong Socialist body to subdue at home, the position of the German Emperor is hardly one that can be counted enviable. It may, perhaps, conduce to the preservation of the peace by giving the potentate other matters than a foreign war to occupy his thoughts. But what of the opportunity offered to France to regain her lost provinces? What moreover of the recollection that the war with France gave a considerable check to the advance of Socialism and broke the power of the International? The necessity under which the Emperor William now feels himself placed undoubtedly affords grounds for speculation.

We have already referred to the intention, announced by Mr Barrow at a meeting last week in Dunedin, to wrest their lands from land-holders by means of excessive taxation. We have also said that the people present at the meeting so addressed had no appearance of people hungering for land on which to expend their own